

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-06 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3788
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
SHAPE USNR
USDOCOSOUTH
USMISSION USNATO

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LIMDIS

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: DC VICE SECRETARY GALLONI'S VIEWS ON ITALIAN POLITICAL
SCENE

SUMMARY: DC VICE SECRETARY GALLONI MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS
ON ITALIAN POLITICAL SUBJECTS: A) THE TIMING OF LEONE'S
RESIGNATION WAS FORCED BY THE PCI; B) THE DC HAS NOT YET
DECIDED ON WHICH CANDIDATE TO SUPPORT FOR THE PRESIDENCY
AND PROBABLY WILL NOT DO SO UNTIL AFTER THE BALLOTING IS UNDER
WAY; B) THE DC SECRETARIAT WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PRESENT
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GOVERNMENT FORMULA CONTINUED UNTIL 1981 SINCE IT HAS THE
EFFECT OF WEAKENING THE PCI'S ELECTORAL STRENGTH IN
PUTTING CONSTANT PRESSURE ON IT TO MAKE CLEAR CHOICE ABOUT
ITS FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION; D) THE JUNE 11 REFERENDA ARE
INTERPRETED AS A CLEAR STATEMENT THAT THE ITALIAN ELECTORATE
DOES NOT WANT THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE; E) THE DC
IS VERY WORRIED ABOUT FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION OF THE

PSI AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT ITS ACTIONS MAY BREAK UP THE PRESENT GOVERNING FORMULA; AND F) THE CHOICE OF ROGNONI AS THE NEW MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR WAS DECIDED WITHIN THE DC AND WAS NOT CLEARED IN ADVANCE WITH THE PCI. END SUMMARY.

1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR AND POLITICAL COUNSELOR, GIOVANNI GALLONI, VICE SECRETARY OF DC PARTY, MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON CURRENT TOPICS OF INTEREST IN THE ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE.

2. RESIGNATION OF LEONE. GALLONI GAVE THE FOLLOWING EXPLANATION OF EVENTS LEADING TO PRESIDENT LEONE'S RESIGNATION. IN APRIL, PRESIDENT LEONE REQUESTED GALLONI TO SOUND OUT THE PARTIES OF THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY ON WHETHER THEY WISHED HIM TO RESIGN. LEONE SAID THAT HE WOULD RESIGN IF THE PARTIES WANTED HIM TO DO SO OR, ALTERNATIVELY, HE WOULD STAY ON IF THE PARTIES WISHED HIM TO DO SO BUT ONLY ON CONDITION THAT THE PARTIES DEFEND HIM SO LONG AS HE REMAINED IN OFFICE. THE RESULT OF GALLONI'S INQUIRY WAS THAT THE PARTIES UNANIMOUSLY THOUGHT THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD NOT RESIGN AND THAT THEY WOULD, ACCORDINGLY, BE PREPARED TO DEFEND HIM. FOLLOWING THE ELECTORAL DEFEAT ON MAY 14 AND IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE UNSATISFACTORY RESULTS OF THE JUNE 11 REFERENDA, THE PCI ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, INFORMED THE DC THAT IT WAS NO LONGER PREPARED TO DEFEND LEONE. THE DC
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IMMEDIATELY CONCLUDED THAT, GIVEN THIS POSITION BY THE PCI, THE OTHER PARTIES WOULD ALSO QUICKLY WITHDRAW THEIR PREVIOUS AGREEMENT TO DEFEND THE PRESIDENT AND LEAVE THE DC HOLDING THE BAG. THE DC THOUGHT IT HAD TIME TO WORK OUT AN ORDERLY RESIGNATION OF THE PRESIDENT TOWARD THE END OF JUNE. IT HAD PLANNED TO BEGIN CONSULTATIONS WITH THE OTHER FOUR PARTIES ON THURSDAY, JUNE 15. INSTEAD, IT WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE BY THE PCI'S FORMAL PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE MORNING OF THURSDAY, JUNE 15, WHICH LEFT THE DC NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO PERSUADE LEONE TO RESIGN IMMEDIATELY. GALLONI ADDED TO THE FOREGOING ACCOUNT HIS OWN PERSONAL CONVICTION THAT, APART FROM MINOR IRREGULARITIES THAT MIGHT EXIST IN LAND TRANSACTIONS, LEONE IS NOT GUILTY OF ANY MAJOR MISCONDUCT. HE ALSO SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE, AS MANY APPARENTLY DO, THAT THE PSI WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR FEEDING INFORMATION TO L'ESPRESSO FOR ITS DEFAMATORY CAMPAIGN AGAINST LEONE.

3. THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. AT THIS POINT THE DC DEOS NOT HAVE A CANDIDATE AND PERHAPS WILL NOT HAVE AGREED UPON ONE UNTIL AFTER THE BALLOTING HAS STARTED.

THE FIRST THREE BALLOTS WILL IN ALL PROBABILITY BE TAKEN
UP BY FAVORITE SON CANDIDATES WHO WILL QUICKLY DISAPPEAR.
THE TWO DC CANDIDATES MOST DISCUSSED, ZACCAGNINI AND
ANDREOTTI, WOULD, IF EITHER WERE ELECTED, CREATE MAJOR
PROBLEMS WITHIN THE DC AND BETWEEN THE DC AND THE OTHER
PARTIES OF THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. AT THIS STAGE
THERE IS NO SIGN OF A GENERAL AGREEMENT AMONG THE
PARTIES OF THE PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY UPON A CANDIDATE
AND GALLONI THINKS THAT SUCH AN AGREEMENT WILL BE
VERY DIFFICULT TO REACH. THE DC WILL DO EVERYTHING
POSSIBLE TO AVOID HAVING TO CHOOSE BETWEEN THE COMMUNISTS

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AND THE LAY PARTIES AS ITS ALLIES IN ELECTING THE
PRESIDENT. THE DC IS SINCERE IN ITS STATEMENT THAT IT
IS NOT OPPOSED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE ELECTION OF A LAY
CANDIDATE IF A SUITABLE ONE CAN BE FOUND THAT CAN
ATTRACT WIDE SUPPORT AMONG THE PARTIES OF THE MAJORITY.
INDEED, AT SOME POINT, THE DC SHOULD BE PREPARED

TO SUPPORT AND EVEN PROPOSE A LAY CANDIDATE. THE ONLY TWO WHICH GALLONI MENTIONED IN THIS REGARD WERE LA MALFA (PRI) AND RETIRING PRESIDENT OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT PAOLO ROSSI (PSDI). GALLONI BELIEVES THAT THE ELECTION PROCESS CAN BE CONCLUDED IN APPROXIMATELY CONFIDENTIAL

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TEN DAYS, BUT ADDED THAT IT COULD WELL TAKE MUCH LONGER.

4. THE PRESENT GOVERNMENTAL FORMULA. GALLONI SAID THAT HE AND THE DC SECRETARIAT WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE THE PRESENT FORMULA (COMMUNISTS IN THE MAJORITY BUT NOT IN THE CABINET) CONTINUE UNTIL THE END OF THE PRESENT LEGISLATURE IN 1981. THIS FORMULA HAS THE EFFECT OF WEAKENING THE PCI'S ELECTORAL STRENGTH, AS DEMONSTRATED ON MAY 14, AND OF PUTTING CONSTANT PRESSURE ON THE PCI TO MAKE A FUNDAMENTAL CHOIC OF DIRECTION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. GALLONI DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE PCI WILL ALLOW THE PRESENT FORMULA TO LAST UNTIL 1981 BECAUSE IT IS TOO COSTLY FOR IT. INSTEAD IT WILL PROBABLY DEMAND, AT SOME POINT, A CHANGE IN FORMULA THAT WOULD PUT THE PCI IN THE CABINET. THE PCI KNOWS THAT, IF AND WHEN IT MAKES SUCH A DEMAND, IT IS IN EFFECT ASKING FOR EARLY PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS SINCE THE DC WILL NOT AGREE TO BRINGING THE PCI INTO THE CABINET. GALLONI REGRETTE THE MIS-UNDERSTANDING ABROAD OF THE DC'S CURRENT STRATEGY OF WEAKENING THE PCI THROUGH ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE PRESENT FORMULA, ADDING THAT THE DC OBVIOUSLY CANNOT MAKE PUBLIC SPEECHES EXPLAINING ITS BASIC RATIONALE SINCE SUCH SPEECHES WOULD PRECIPITATE A PCI WITHDRAWAL. COMMENT: NOT ALL OF GALLONI'S COLLEAGUES IN THE DC WOULD AGREE WITH THE FOREGOING. MANY OF THEM BELIEVE THAT GALLONI AND OTHERS IN THE DC SECRETARIAT SEE THE PRESENT FORMULA AS A PRELIMINARY STEP TO BRINGING THE COMMUNISTS INTO THE CABINET. END COMMENT.

5. THE JUNE 11 REFERENDA. GALLONI SAID THAT HE INTERPRETS THE RESULTS OF THE JUNE 11 REFERENDA AS A CLEAR STATEMENT BY THE ITALIAN ELECTORATE THAT IT DOES CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT WANT THE "HISTORIC COMPROMISE." HE ALSO SAID THAT THE RESULTS ARE A CLEAR DEMONSTRATION THAT THE ITALIAN ELECTORATE WILL NOT BE LED AROUND BY THE NOSE BY THE POLITICAL PARTIES, A LESSON WHICH THE PARTIES

WOULD DO WELL NOT TO ROGET.

6. PSI. GALLONI EXPRESSED BOTH DISAPPOINTMENT AND CONCERN ABOUT THE PSI. HE SAID THAT, WHILE SOME OF CRAXI'S PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ANNOUNCEMENTS SUGGEST THAT HIS INTENTION IS TO MOVE THE PSI AWAY FROM THE PCI AND TOWARD THE CENTER OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AS A WESTERN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY, THE PSI'S CONCRETE ACTIONS GO IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION AS THE PSI CONTINUES TO TAKE POSITIONS TO THE LEFT OF THE PCI. GALLONI'S PERCEPTION IS THAT THE PSI IS STILL PURSUING THE ALTERNATIVE OF THE LEFT AND THE "DREAM" OF REVERSING THE PSI'S AND PCI'S PRESENT ELECTORAL STRENGTHS TO ACHIEVE A SITUATION LIKE THAT IN FRANCE WHERE THE PCI IS THE SMALLER OF THE TWO PARTIES. GALLONI MADE SPECIFIC AND HIGHLY CRITICAL REFERENCE TO THE PSI'S BEHAVIOR IN THE RECENT CRISIS IN THE CITY OF NAPLES IN WHICH THE PSI REFUSED TO LEAD A LAY COALITION AND TAKE OVER THE MAYORSHIP, WHICH THE DC WOULD HAVE SUPPORTED, BUT INSTEAD INSISTED ON PCI RETAINING MAYORSHIP WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE LAY COALITION. HE FEARS THAT THE PSI MAY BEHAVE SUFFICIENTLY IRRESPONSIBLY IN THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OR ON ECONOMIC MEASURES AS TO BREAK UP THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT FORMULA.

7. MINISTER OF INTERIOR ROGNONI. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, GALLONI FIRMLY DENIED PRESS STORIES THAT ROGNONI'S APPOINTMENT HAD BEEN CLEARED WITH THE PCI. HE SAID THAT THE CHOICE OF THE NEW MINISTER OF INTERIOR WAS A SUBJECT THAT WAS DISCUSSED AT GREAT LENGTH WITHIN THE DC AND THAT ONE CANDIDATE AFTER ANOTHER WAS REJECTED FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS. IN THE END, HE SAID, ROGNONI
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WAS PROPOSED BY ZACCAGNINI ON THE BASIS OF HIS PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE MAN. GALLONI SAID THE APPOINTMENT WAS NOT WITHOUT PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF ROGNONI'S LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE POLICE-SECURITY FIELD. GALLONI ADDED THAT, WHILE HE DID NOT KNOW FOR SURE, HE WOULD ASSUME THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE HAD INFORMED THE OTHER PARTIES OF THE MAJORITY OF ROGNONI'S APPOINTMENT SHORTLY IN ADVANCE OF THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT. GARDNER

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